

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Rose-crowned Fruit-dove on Maret Island – a new location and food source – The Rose-crowned Fruit-dove *Ptilinopus regina* distribution lies along the Kimberley coast and a number of off shore islands between Broome and the Drysdale River. On 10 August 2005, while carrying out a bird survey back from a large sandy bay on Maret Island-north an unusually large number of Rose-crowned Fruit-doves, previously unrecorded on the island, were observed feeding on the fruits of *Scaevola taccada* and *Pittosporum moluccanum*. Neither of these two food sources have been recorded in Johnstone, R.E. and Storr, G.M. 1998. *Handbook of Western Australian Birds*. Vol. 1. Western Australian Museum, Perth.

Scaevola taccada is a pantropical species often recorded on oceanic islands and behind the strand line of sandy beaches (Kenneally, K. Choules Edinger, D. Willing, T. 1996. *Broome and Beyond*). At the time of my visit the shrubs, located in low dunes up from a sandy beach, were full of fruit and still flowering. There were up to fifteen Rose-crowned-Fruit-doves clustered in three shrubs, about three metres in height, feeding on the fruit.

Pittosporum moluccanum is currently listed as Priority 4 flora by the Department of Conservation and Land Management and is known from several other places in the

Kimberley (Kenneally *et al.* 1996). On the western side of Maret Island-north it grows to a height of three to four metres, in dunes in close proximity to *Scaevola taccada*. On the edge of vine thicket back from the fore dunes there are some trees up to five metres in height. At the time of my visit many seed capsules had opened exposing sticky seeds, and about five other Rose-crowned Fruit-doves were feeding on them, making the total of about twenty birds.

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Additional breeding information for Fairy Tern on the Houtman Abrolhos Islands – Fairy Tern *Sterna nereis* are widespread along the Western Australian coast, from the Dampier Archipelago south to Israelite Bay. Johnstone and Storr in the *Handbook of Western Australian Birds Volume 1* give their breeding times in the Pilbara and Gascoyne as July to September, and further south as late October to mid-February. Surman 1998 (Seabird breeding schedules at the Pelsaert group of islands, Houtman Abrolhos, Western Australia, *Records of the Western Australian Museum* 19: 209–215) records them as breeding until mid February at the Abrolhos Islands.

During a bird survey at the Houtman Abrolhos Islands with *Landscape Expeditions*, during late